



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES &  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** David Sykes

**SUBJECT:** ANIMAL CARE AND SERVICES  
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

**DATE:** February 24, 2014

Approved

Date

March 3, 14

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept the semi-annual report on the activities of the Animal Care and Services Division.

## OVERVIEW

The following memorandum provides an update on the activities of the Animal Care and Services (ACS) Division. ACS is responsible for sheltering and field services programs related to domestic animals in the City of San José and the contract cities of Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, and Saratoga. Field services include responding to aggressive, injured, sick, or stray animals, dead animal pick up, barking dog complaints, vicious or dangerous animal regulation, pet shop inspections, injured or sick wildlife, and licensing services.

The Animal Care Center located on Monterey Road provides shelter for stray and homeless domestic animals, reunites lost pets with their families, places animals in responsible new homes, and, when necessary, euthanizes animals that are suffering or are dangerous. Currently, the Division provides animal care and services to about 1,200,000 residents in Santa Clara County, which is nearly 65% of the human population.

This report details the activities of the 2013 calendar year (CY), unless otherwise indicated. The statistical information includes data from service contracts with the cities of Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, and Saratoga.

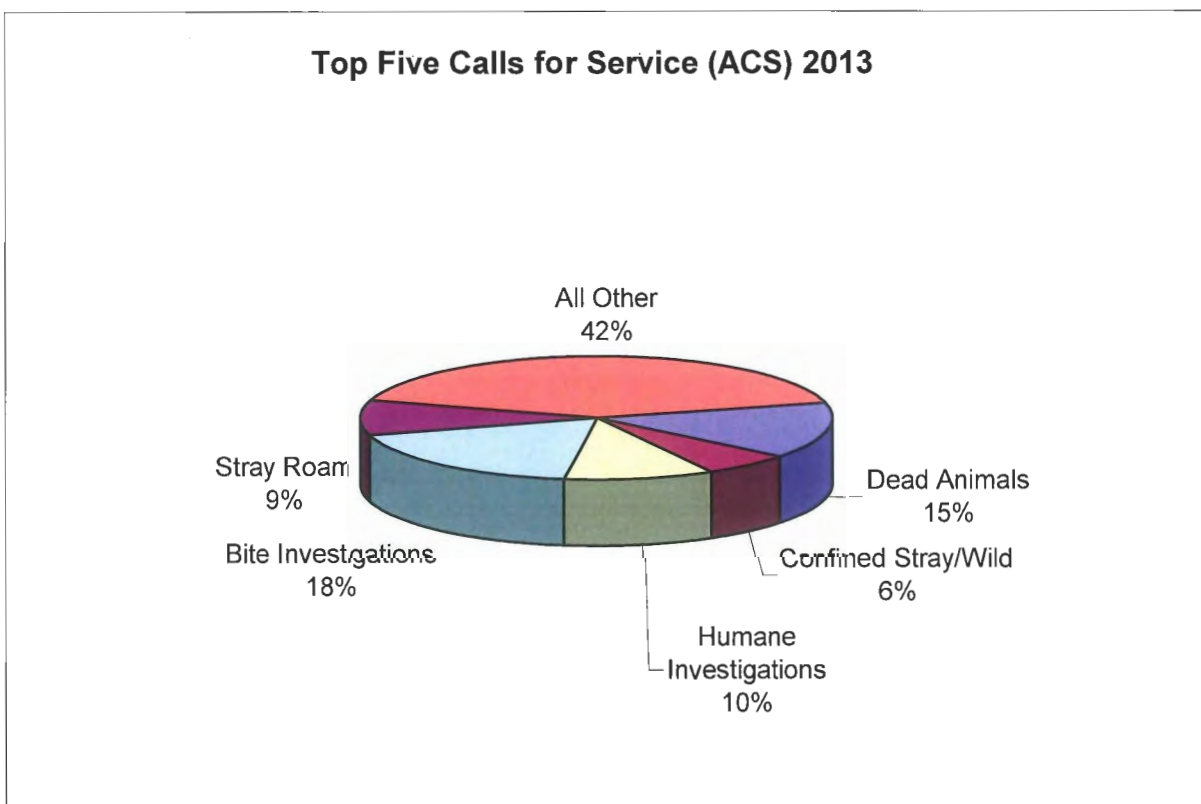
## ANALYSIS

### Field Operations

During CY 2013, ACS officers responded in person to 23,741 calls for service. These calls are categorized into three priority levels with Priority 1 (P1) calls being the most urgent (aggressive dogs, injured animals, police assists). Priority 1 calls represented about 13% (3,210) of the total service calls. Priority 2 calls are urgent but are not considered emergencies and include animal bite reports, confined animals, animals in traps, and agency assists. Priority 3 calls are less urgent than Priority 1 and 2 calls, and include loose animals, dead animals, and calls that do not pose immediate threats to public health and safety.

Key metrics related to service calls include number of calls, distribution of types of calls, and response to priority 1 service calls. Chart 1 below shows the five most common types of calls for animal care and services in 2013.

### **CHART 1: TOP FIVE CALLS FOR SERVICE**



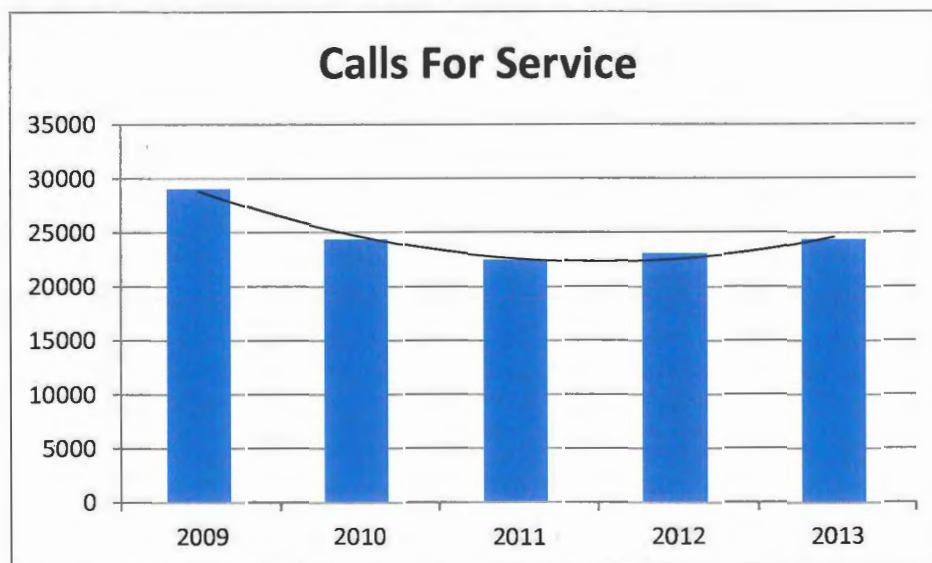
**Calls for Service** - Calls completed by field services in 2013 increased by almost 6% (1,289 more calls) compared to the previous year (Chart 2 below). There are 10 Animal Services Officers (ASO) who provide services and emergency response to San Jose and Milpitas. Three additional officers respond to calls for service in the contract cities of Saratoga, Los Gatos and Cupertino. On average, 3-5 officers are on duty during the day shift and 2-3 during the evening shift. The increased number of calls completed is the continuing result of an improved response model that now includes using two officers to focus specifically on investigations. Using this model, the field staff has been able to decrease the average response time to most types of calls and has been able to substantially reduce the previously existing call backlog. This has enabled ACS to provide for more proactive enforcement and better service response to resident concerns.

**Types of Calls** - The field services unit responds to approximately 50 different call types. In addition to the five most common service request types shown in Chart 1 (which comprise about 59% of the calls), other types of common calls include injured or sick animals, cat complaints, animal nuisances, and agency assists.

**Response Time** - Due to changes in how officers respond to calls for service, officers are able to focus more directly on the highest priority calls and were able to continue to improve performance in responding to Priority 1 calls within one hour or less. In 2013, the 97% performance level was well above the current year target level of 90%, and even exceeded the 5-year goal of 95%.

Priority 2 calls for service are urgent but not emergencies. The response target for Priority 2 is to respond within six hours. In 2013, that target was achieved 65% of the time. Priority 3 calls have a target response time of 36 hours and that was accomplished 88% of the time.

**CHART 2: CALLS FOR SERVICE**

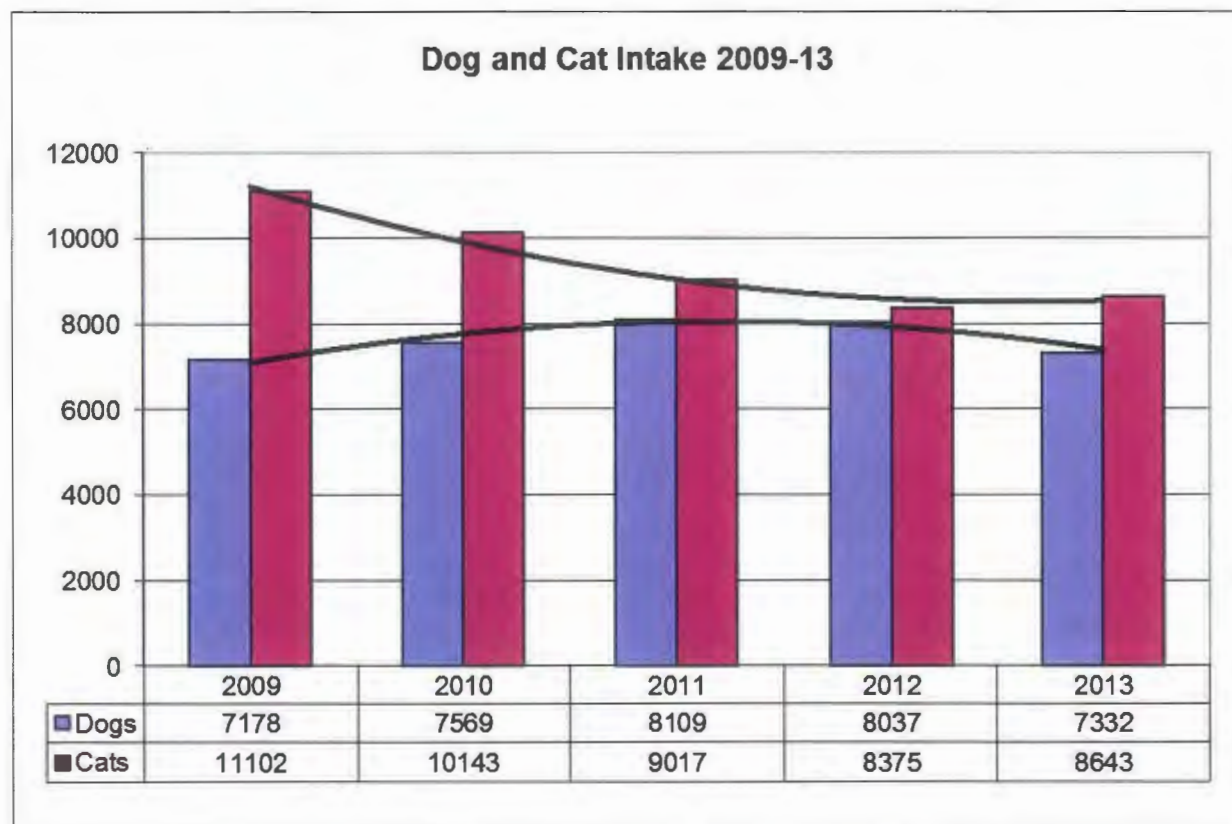


### Shelter Operations

In 2013 the Animal Care Center (ACC) provided shelter to 16,755 domestic animals and 912 wild animals. The months of November through February are generally the lowest volume months in an animal shelter. March and October are transitional months and April through September are very high volume due to seasonal litters of cats.

**Animal Intake** – Total combined domestic animal intake dropped almost 3% compared to 2012. Dog intake decreased by almost 9% (-705), and cat intake increased by 3% (+268). The decrease in dogs continues as a result of a partnership with the Humane Society of Silicon Valley and a grant provided by Pet Smart Charities to provide FREE spay and neuter for any Chihuahuas in the following five zip codes: 95111, 95112, 95116, 95122, and 95127. This grant recently expired and ACS is in negotiations with partners to extend it for another two years. The increase in cat intake is primarily due to an increase in kittens and the increased acceptance of “owner surrendered” cats. In the past, the shelter has limited the number of cats accepted from people who own them because of space limitations. The overall 5-year trend of decreases in cat intake enables the shelter to help more cat owners and also to help people who have too many cats find a better situation and reduce the number of cats they own.

**CHART 3: DOG AND CAT INTAKE**

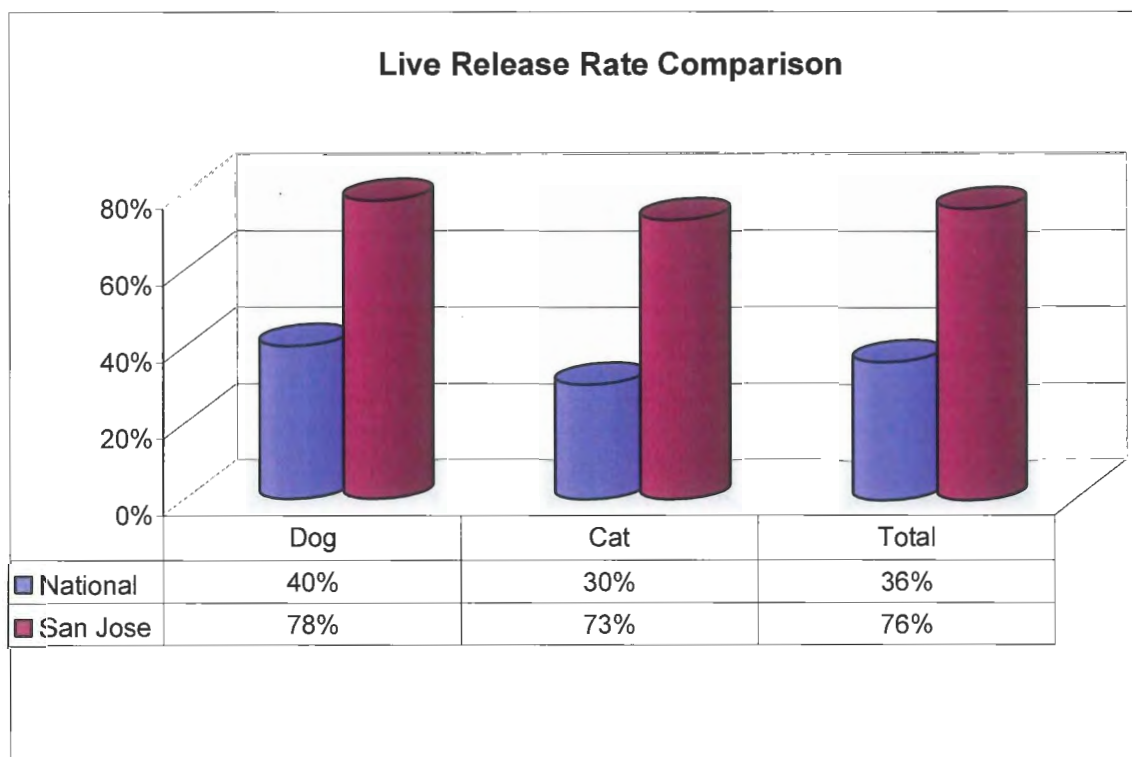




**Live Release Rate (LRR)** - The Live Release Rate is an industry term that measures the number of animals that leave an animal shelter alive. This is determined by dividing the number of animals that were released alive (to their owner, adoptions, rescue) by the total number that were admitted alive. Based on national statistics for an open-door public animal shelter, a very successful LRR for dogs and cats combined exceeds 80%.

Total combined (dog + cat + other) LRR for FY 2013 at the Animal Care Center was 76%. This is the highest rate achieved since San Jose started ACS in 2001, and significantly higher than the national average of approximately 36%. Individually, the LRR for dogs was 78% and for cats, it was 73%. Chart 4 compares San Jose's progress to the national averages.

**CHART 4: LIVE RELEASE RATE**



**Adoptions** – Overall, ACS processed 3,431 adoptions which was 8% higher compared to the same period last year. The Animal Care Center continues to offer several special pricing events at various times during the year and also was able to receive occasional media coverage. The division is using grant funding from Maddie's Fund to provide needed resources to conduct additional outreach and improve adoptions and expects to participate in a major free adoption event in June. The same two-day event earned ACS almost \$150,000 in grant funds last year and found homes for 238 animals in one weekend.

**Cat Study** – ACS has negotiated a sponsorship from the ASPCA to conduct a scientific study of the successful cat programs that have reduced euthanasia and intake of cats in San Jose. This study has begun and includes a collaboration of groups to produce a paper for publication in a scientific journal. This study is expected to be complete by the end of the current fiscal year.

**Council Referrals** – Two referrals were forwarded to ACS in the last few months.

1. Review and analysis of wild pig activity and control measures to make recommendations on the best course forward after an extended urgency ordinance expires in 2015.
2. Review of the inclusion of a ban on cat declawing in San Jose as part of an overall analysis and review of the animal related municipal codes.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Major programming efforts will include municipal code updates, improved adoptions, increased licensing revenues, a 2-year extension of the recently completed 2-year PetSmart Chihuahua grant, and use of the Maddie's Fund Grant to provide better overall care and outcomes for homeless dogs and cats.

### **CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP10-069 (a) City Organizational & Administrative Activities.

/s/

DAVID SYKES

Director of Public Works

For questions, contact Jon Cicirelli, Deputy Director, Animal Care and Services, 408-794-7223.